

Appln. No. 09/955,858  
Amendment dated December 16, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of July 23, 2004

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please amend claims 1 and 3 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). An image data acquisition method comprising:

scanning a sample, which includes a plurality of spots on a substrate, with a light beam;

5 acquiring scanned image data for each of a plurality of regions into which the substrate is divided by receiving light from the sample;

sequentially obtaining the ~~acquired~~ scanned image data of one divided region ~~obtained by scanning a region of a~~  
10 ~~predetermined size~~ every time a region scanned with the light reaches a ~~predetermined size~~ of said one divided region, the region having a plurality of scanning lines including a start scanning line and a stop scanning line, the stop scanning line determining a boundary with respect to a next divided region; and

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15 determining a fluorescence intensity of at least the stop  
scanning line, wherein if the fluorescence intensity of the stop  
scanning line is greater than a predetermined threshold, a  
position of the stop scanning line is adjusted such that the  
fluorescence intensity of the ~~adjusted~~ stop scanning line is less  
20 than the predetermined threshold wherein the boundary of the  
divided region ~~adjusted stop scanning line~~ does not overlap with  
the plurality of spots on the substrate.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended). The image data acquisition  
method according to claim 2 1, wherein the sequentially stored  
acquired scanned image data is stored by adding position  
information regarding respective scanning regions thereto.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented). The image data acquisition  
method according to claim 1, wherein the sample is a DNA  
microarray in which a plurality of spots are arranged as a  
measurement object.

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Claim 5 (Previously Presented). The image data acquisition method according to claim 1, wherein the scanning by the light beam is performed by main scanning and sub-scanning in a direction orthogonal to the main scanning, and the size of the scanning region is adjusted by regulating the number of scanning lines during the main scanning.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented). The image data acquisition method according to claim 1, wherein an analysis processing is executed for the stored scanned image data in parallel with scanning of a next region when the storage of the scanned image data is complete.

Claim 7 (Cancelled).

Claim 8 (Previously Presented). The image data acquisition method according to claim 1, wherein the scanning by the light beam is carried out by main scanning and sub-scanning in a direction orthogonal to the main scanning, and both of the main scanning and the sub-scanning are carried out by moving the sample.

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Claim 9 (Previously Presented). The image data acquisition method according to claim 1, wherein the scanning by the light beam is carried out by main scanning and sub-scanning in a direction orthogonal to the main scanning, and the main scanning  
5 is conducted with an optical scanner.